

Elephants For Africa

Conservation through research & education



Elephant Tails

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Welcome From Dr Kate Evans, Founder

This summer will see Simon and I complete the final stage of our Tri-Continent Triathlon. EfA's research and education projects in Botswana desperately need another vehicle to conduct their projects effectively. Through our fundraising, we hope to raise enough money to buy a second-hand 4x4.

So far, we have climbed Kilimanjaro and run the New York City Marathon. In July we shall be finishing off this mammoth challenge by 'Riding the Dragon'. We will cycle the length of Wales along the Lôn Las Cymru route developed by Sustrans (National Cycle Network, Route 8 and 42).

This demanding 250mile route is one of the toughest of all the long distance routes on the NCN. It will take us from Chepstow in the south to Holyhead in the far north, crossing every major Welsh mountain range en-route. We've been warned that we'll need "strong legs and a good set of lungs" to complete it.

To sponsor us please go to www.justgiving.com/KateandSimsMammoth-Ride/, TEX ELEP 02 then the amount you wish to sponsor to 70070 (UK

only) or email us at info@elephantsforafrica.org to find out alternative ways of donating. This is our final push for a much needed vehicle.



The successful EfA summit of Mt Kilimanjaro

Art seems to be a theme for this year. In March, the amazing wildlife artist – Su Lees — came and spent a month in camp with us. Also, another long-time EfA supporter and professional photographer – Lesley Wood – has donated some beautiful limited edition prints of a bull elephant in Botswana. They are available to buy through www.wildearthfineart.com and a framed print is being raffled off at the Bristol Festival of Nature (tickets will be available on both days of the festival).

This quarter has been very busy because we said a fond farewell to Charlie Ellis and hello to Danielle Spitzer who joins us from Alabama, USA. You can read about her first impressions on page 3. Mphoeng has been busy

writing up his Masters thesis and reflects on his time in the UK on page 2. We also welcome the smallest addition to our clan as Graham and

Stacy Bowles had a daughter named Samantha in March. Many congratulations to the very proud parents.

This year we are experiencing an even larger flood than last year and this wet cycle is likely to be here for

the next 10-15 years! So it is all fun and games at the moment as we drive through all the water.

We are not having a problem finding elephants because this wet period is attracting more and more females into the area, despite it being predominantly a bull area. This appears to be changing, which confirms our belief that only long-term monitoring will enable us to understand the requirements of the African elephant.

We look forward to seeing some of you at the Bristol Festival of Nature, until the next time, Stay well.

Tlhola sentle,

Kate

Special points of interest:

Limited edition print for sale

Mphoeng's exciting year

Bristol Festival of Nature

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Elephant Tails



Mphoeng working in the field



Mphoeng outside the School of Biological Sciences, University of Bristol

What a Year it has Been *by Mphoeng Ofithile*

This past year has been amazing and I can't believe how fast time has gone. It seems like it was only yesterday that I was in Bristol, learning statistics for my Masters of Science Degree. Living in the UK for three months was fantastic and exceeded all of my expectations. I met so many wonderful people and enjoyed life as a student at such a prestigious university.

During my stay, everything was so different from my life here in Botswana, from the infrastructure and traffic to the amount of people and weather. I am pleased to say that I experienced my first

winter with snow and even had a chance to make a snow man.

As glad as I was to experience this, I was also nervous that the weather would prevent my flight back home on Christmas Eve. Each day I waited anxiously for any updates on flight cancellations. When I arrived at Heathrow airport, I met some people who had been there for several days thanks to the poor weather. I nervously approached the ticket counter and was told that I did not have a seat on the flight, but luckily the attendant sorted everything out. Finally I was on the plane flying home. When I arrived,

everyone was anxious to hear all of my stories from England. I was even asked if there was any soil there!

I am now busy writing up my thesis in the Okavango Delta; this is due to be submitted in September 2011. I am looking forward to continuing my work here, there is still much to be done!



'This past year has been amazing'
Mphoeng Ofithile



The male elephant, Tyson, being a little stropky, as usual

Mahout Memorial Football Match *by Kate Evans*

The African elephant faces an uncertain future. Over 70% of the population is struggling to survive outside of protected areas; trying to make their way in a sea of humanity. Human-Elephant conflict is on the rise in Botswana, whilst the African elephant population is being decimated in many other countries due to the illegal ivory trade.

At *Elephants for Africa*, we are very lucky to share our lives with many wonderful people that work in the two commercial safari camps where we are based. Amongst these friends are Abu Camp's elephant handlers who have dedicated their lives to the elephants in their herd. They were aware of the increasing conflict and as a result, rapidly increasing number of elephant deaths throughout Botswana

and wanted to do something active for those that had lost their lives. When you live and work with elephants, you can not ignore their individuality and spirit, and they were saddened by the losses.

They organised a Memorial Football Match. With football being such a passion in Botswana, this was a very fitting event to remember the lost. The Abu and Seba Camp staff played against the building contractors who are re-building Abu Camp. One of the most experienced elephant handlers, Big Joe, began the proceedings with a speech that carried a strong conservation

message: we all have a part to play in the conservation of the species with which we share our world and we must make decisions every day to live in harmony.

I was also asked to say a few words, which I found hard to articulate because I was so touched by this event where all the staff were either playing or supporting. The football was very entertaining, as it can only be with the competitiveness of the game in the beautiful surroundings of the Okavango Delta. At the heart of it all though, were the elephants that had not survived the conflict or illegal killings.



My Arrival *by Danielle Spitzer*

I can't believe 13 days have gone by, since I arrived in the Okavango Delta. Each day has brought excitement and intrigue. For the first few nights, I was greeted by a herd of elephants who decided the sausage tree above my tent was the tastiest. The elephants were literally within a few feet of my head. I was a bit frightened for the first couple of nights listening to the sound of the elephants digesting their food, hoping one would not decide to lean against my tent for a snooze!

Next, a female leopard and her cub came and slept in camp for a few nights. They made no secret about it as

they called out loudly before bed and early in the morning. The last few nights have had routine visits from the hyena who enjoy pacing back and forth next to my tent, probably coming from the kitchen.

I am pleased that every day we have been fortunate enough to see elephants. Sometimes I have to remind myself to stop gawping at these large majestic mammals and start recording their data. I enjoy watching the young elephants who seem more interested in playing around than feeding. I still get a little nervous when I pull up to a bull elephant in musth and make sure to keep my distance.

Two events that I will never forget were seeing a one week old baby elephant with light grey skin and pink ears. It was so tiny, I was worried that one of the elders may step on it, but I know how careful elephants are with their babies.

Another wonderful experience was when we pulled up to a group of 60 elephants all spread out across one area! This was the largest group of elephants that I had ever seen and was a bit overwhelmed over whom to study first.



Danielle out in the field

The elephants were literally within a few feet of my head

F.I.T Workshop Namibia *by Kate Evans*

In May I visited Namibia for the first 'Footprint Identification Technique' workshop which looked at using footprints for non-invasive individual recognition. Sky Alibhai and Zoe Jewell are passionate conservationists who have developed a computer programme that distinguishes individuals through their spoor.

They have primarily been working on predators and rhino, and I was invited to talk at the workshop about how

this technology could help elephant conservation. It was 4 days of hard work and interesting conversations.

It was also refreshing and uplifting to meet all the people involved who are so passionate and dedicated to working hard for conservation.

www.wildtrack.org



The F.I.T participants

PAAZAB Conference

In May, PAAZAB (African Association for Zoos and Aquaria) held its annual meeting in Pretoria, hosted by the National Zoological Gardens. The theme this year was conservation education and Dr Kate Evans was invited to talk about in-situ conservation has a role to play in environmental education.

The presentation focused on how in-situ research programmes can bring environmental education to the rural communities who do

not have access to zoos and aquaria.

Elephants for Africa has set up the Boyce-Zero Scholarship fund which helps local students complete their post-graduate degrees in environmental science. The charity also runs Elephun weekends for children, which teaches them about elephants and research.





Limited Edition Print for Sale - by Lesley Wood



Snake River

When I visited the Okavango Delta last year, I went on a walking trek and came face to face with wild elephants. At one point it was far closer than intended! I will never forget this - they are such magnificent creatures and it was an exhilarating, heart-pounding encounter.

So, to celebrate the launch of *Wild Earth Fine Art Photography* it seems fitting that the first print released for sale should be not only be of an elephant, but also my first special limited-edition fine art print. It is of an impressive elephant photographed by me in Botswana and is called: *An Elephant for Africa*. I am selling this print to support the very

special charity: *Elephants for Africa*.

As a passionate photographer and biologist I want to do something to help the elephants living in the delta. All profits from the sale of this print will go to *EfA* to help continue the work of Kate and her colleagues.

I am also thrilled to announce that television wildlife presenters James Honeyborne and Nick Knowles (who are the patrons of *EfA*) will also be signing each print.

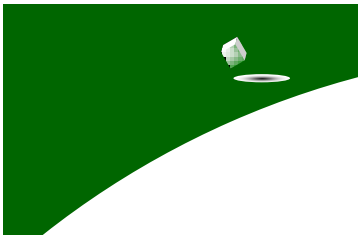
Footnote

This print is 20x24 inches in size and printed by giclee fine art printing on fine art paper. It is age resistant with a 100% cotton rag content. Each print is supplied ready to frame with a certificate of authenticity. This edition is limited to 500 numbered and signed prints.

I came face to face (far closer than intended at one point!) for the first time with wild elephants



An unusual sighting on our May monthly mammal survey



Elephants For Africa

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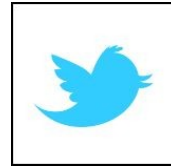
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Elephantkate

Simbuckingham



[Www.ElephantsForAfrica.org](http://www.ElephantsForAfrica.org)



Have a Wild Time at the Bristol Festival of Nature

On the weekend of 18-19th June, the Festival of Nature returns to Bristol to unleash the city's wild side this summer. *Elephants for Africa* will once more have a stall. As the biggest event of its kind in the UK, this festival gives wildlife enthusiasts of all ages the opportunity to get up close and personal with the natural world, free of charge.

Throughout the weekend there will be loads of exciting activities from over 80 environmental organisations: talks, workshops, storytelling, films and entertainment. Bristol Aquarium are showing free IMAX screenings, giving visitors a unique opportunity

to see fantastic wildlife films on the amazing large-scale dome; and the world-renowned BBC Natural History Unit will have a special display of their new 3D technology.

Visit the Amphitheatre and explore the Wildlife Bee Garden where you can build nest boxes, pick up some seeds and take home plenty of ideas for recreating a wildlife haven in your own backyard. Look out for bugs, bats and some special visitors.

Other highlights include a contemporary sustainable living show (straight from Olympia in London) and the

bustling festival market which will be packed with traders selling local produce and hot food from across the Southwest. Please visit www.festivalofnature.org for more information.

Raffle

This year *Elephants for Africa* will be hosting a raffle on each day of the Bristol Festival of Nature. The first prize is either a limited-edition fine art photograph kindly donated by Lesley Woods, or a limited edition print by Bristol Zoo's very own artist in residence: Su Lees.